DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 117 453 CE 006 106

AUTHOR Passmore, David Lynn
TITLE Policy Implications of "Inequality" for Career Education. Monograph No. 2.
INSTITUTION Bowling Green State Univ., Ohio. Career and Technology Education Graduate Faculty.
PUB DATE 76
NOTE 23p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage
DESCRIPTORS Book Reviews; *Career Education; Educational Assessment; *Educational Equality; Educational Needs; Educational Philosophy; Educational Policy; *Equal Education; Social Class; Social Differences; *State of the Art Reviews

ABSTRACT

The conclusions presented in a book entitled Inequality, written by Jencks, et al., call for a critical analysis of the popular beliefs regarding schools and schooling as a means to achieve the social, economic, and cultural goals of the American Dream. This meritocratic system offers equal opportunities but may yield unequal results. In the Jencks study, educational opportunities, educational attainment, occupational status, income, and job satisfaction were all found to be unequally distributed among individuals. These inequalities are real, even though their causes may be questioned, and they have implications for career education, which is, like faith in schooling, presented as a facilitator of the meritocratic ideal. Because it can exert no influence over the working world, it is likely that career education will act as a conservative force to maintain the very societal inequalities it was designed to overcome. The achievement of equality will require more radical social and economic changes than mere school reforms offered by career education. (Author/EC)

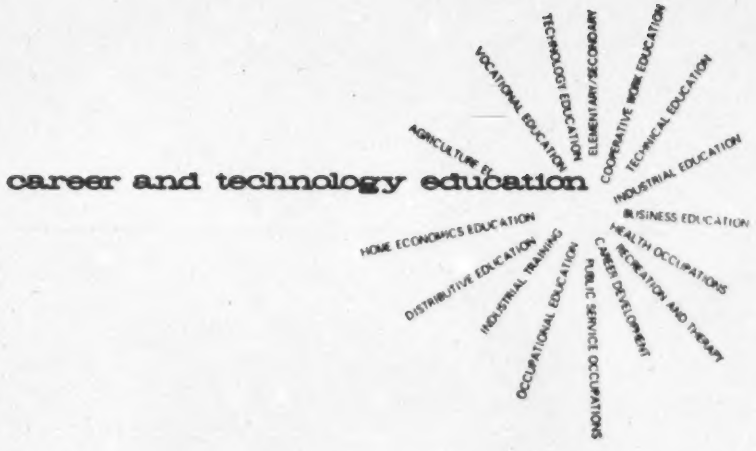
****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

ED117453

JAN 19 1976

Policy Implications of **Inequality** for Career Education

David Lynn Passmore, Ph.D.



CE 006 106

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

Monograph Series

published by the career and technology education graduate faculty
bowling green state university, bowling green, ohio 43403

The Graduate Faculty Monograph Committee: Jerry Streichler - Chairman
George R. Horton
Laura Kivlin

monograph number two
winter 1976

FOREWARD

The Career and Technology Education Monograph Series offers a forum for original, previously unpublished ideas resulting from intensive research and/or intensive personal reflection which a jury determines warrants wide dissemination. David L. Passmore's "Implications of Inequality for Career Education," the second in the series, more than fulfills the intent of the series.

Readers are cautioned that Passmore's work is not simply a review of the book Inequality by Jencks et al. Rather, it is a critical analysis of American notions of schools and schooling as a means to achieve certain social and cultural goals. Career education is singled out as an effort, ostensibly designed to achieve those ideals, which will fail for the same reasons that the educational system has failed in the past. Moreover, Passmore posits that career education, as he believes it is presently conceived, is likely to act as a conservative force to maintain the very societal inequalities it is designed to eradicate. Clearly, the issue may not be within career education, but in our society's schizophrenic value system. Can the reduction of inequality (a goal of our society?) be accomplished in the merit-success-reward context of American ideals?

The editors were sorely tempted to dispute Passmore's assumptions and conclusions and expect that readers will wish to do the same. More than offering an opportunity for disputation, however, we are proud to be able to share the challenges which spring from a fertile, creative mind and free spirit. This work typifies the kind of criticism and challenge to which the leadership in career education must respond.

David L. Passmore, lives in Scottsville, N.Y. He recently joined the staff of the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID) at Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) as an assistant professor and research associate for the Department of Career Opportunities, Division of Technical Assistance.

Passmore's responsibilities include conducting research into the personal, social, and economic aspects surrounding the preparation, entry, and adaption of deaf persons into the labor market.

He received a Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota, M.Ed. from Bowling Green State University, Ohio, and a B.S. degree from SUNY at Buffalo.

Prior to joining NTID, he was an assistant professor, University of Massachussetts, Amherst; a research fellow at the University of Minnesota; and a consultant for various educational projects.

Jerry Streichler
For the Monograph Committee

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to the editors of the Career and Technology Education Monograph Series for selecting this essay on career education for publication. An earlier version of this paper was presented at the Fourth International Meeting of the American Industrial Arts Association held in Cincinnati during March, 1975. Bibliographic assistance and helpful discussion were provided by Elizabeth C. R. Chase, research assistant in the Center for Occupational Education at the University of Massachusetts, and Victor Manuel Gomez-Campo, political refugee living in Bogota, Colombia. This essay is dedicated to Victor -- to his gentle intellect; to his revolutionary spirit; to his courage.

This essay was produced through the course of an agreement between the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare and the National Technical Institute for the Deaf.

D. L. P.

Much of the debate surrounding the wisdom of the American educational experience has been based on dogmatic arguments which often rely on conventional wisdom or some set of a priori principles; solid empirical evidence has rarely entered this debate. However, Christopher Jencks and his colleagues (1972) at the Harvard Center for Educational Policy Studies compiled a probing three-year synthesis of evidence that could influence this debate. Their research drew upon a wide range of major surveys conducted since 1960 (for example, the U.S. Census Bureau's studies of social mobility and income distribution; Project TALENT's survey of American high school graduates; the Equality of Opportunity Survey). The authors examined the effects of family background and schooling on adult success. Their conclusions were similar to their report's title: Inequality.[1] Specifically, they concluded that: (1) income, educational opportunity, educational attainment, occupational status, job satisfaction, and cognitive skills were, indeed, unequally distributed in the U.S.; (2) even if the U.S. schools could be reformed to ensure that every child receives equal educational opportunity, adult society would hardly be more equal than it is now; and (3) any liberal reform movement, such as compensatory education, is doomed to fail if U.S. society continues to function in the same manner as it has in the past. They recommended that more radical social and ecomomic changes than mere school reform will be necessary if equality is ultimately to be achieved in America.

---

[1] Although frequently cited in this and other reviews as the "Jencks study," Inequality was authored by Jencks as well as M. Smith, H. Ackland, M. J. Bane, D. Cohen, H. Gintis, B. Heyns, and S. Michelson who were associated with the Harvard Center for Educational Policy Studies at the time of writing. The budget for the Center, which Jencks administered, came from the Carnegie Corporation, the Office of the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, the Office of Economic Opportunity, the Urban Institute, the Massachusetts State Department of Education, the U.S. Office of Education, and the Ford Foundation.

Career education has all the trappings of a great school reform movement. Motivated by critiques of schooling during the 1960's, the career education concept acquired some impressive (at least during that time) endorsements during its rise from former President Nixon who, in his 1972 State of the Union Message, emphasized that:

> There is no more disconcerting waste than the waste of human potential. And there is no better investment than an investment in human fulfillment. Career education can help make education and training more meaningful for the student, more rewarding for the teacher, more available for the adult, more relevant for the disadvantaged, and more productive for our country.

But, will career education, as reformist activity in the schools, fail as Jencks' study might suggest? The remainder of this essay addresses this question. Specifically, three focusing questions provide the organization for this examination of the implications of Inequality for career education: (1) what has been the source of American faith in schooling as a means of implementing democratic ideals; (2) what was asserted in Inequality to challenge this faith; and (3) what, if any, implications should the results of Inequality have for the career education movement? The first question is answered by providing a brief exposition of the American meritocratic ideal while the second question is answered by providing a terse summary of Inequality. An answer to the third question will be provided by critically examining the evidence presented in Jencks study and, then, by relating any defensible conclusions derived from the study to some of the current thought on the concept of career education.

American Faith in Education

During the rise of compulsory schooling in the United States, social planning rhetoric rallied around the role that mass education could have in advancing the Great American Dream. The emerging American creed asserted as axiomatic that increases in the level of educational attainment in the population would positively impact American goals of social and economic egalitarianism as well as provide solutions to other pervasive societal problems. In Commanger's American Mind (1950), a

survey of American intellectual history, we read, "No other people ever demanded so much of its schools....To the schools went the responsibility of....inculcating democracy, materialism, and equaliterianism." In a similar vein, Horace Mann (1891), a leading figure in the rise of U.S. public schooling, was led to characterize American education as "the great equalizer of the conditions of men [p. 289]." Thus, the ostensive purpose of American public schooling was to "collect little plastic lumps of dough from households and shape them on the social kneadingboard [Ross, 1906, p. 168]" so that the American democratic ideal could be realized. Such were America's great visions for its public schools.

What were the foundations of American faith in education? One central notion was that the schools could facilitate the American ideal of justice by which it was asserted that the nature of personal status and power in U.S. society should be determined by one's talent and willingness to work hard rather than by aristocratic privilege. Young (1959) assigned the term "meritocracy" to this system of justice. Now, the idea of a society based on meritocratic ideals is not new (see Nisbet, 1974); but, the American implementation of this ideal has been unique. The American meritocratic hope was succinctly expressed by Frank Lester Ward in an unpublished manuscript written about 1871-73 (cited in Karier, 1974):

> On the ruins of our present false and fictitious hierarchy will be built a system of true and natural hierarchy in which each will be satisfied to occupy the place to which nature assigned him, and none will be able by any means of deception, false appearances, wealth, or power to receive the advantages of higher places.
>
> ....Universal education is the power, which is destined to overthrow every species of hierarchy. It is destined to remove all artificial inequality and leave the natural inequalities to find their true level. With the artificial inequalities of caste, rank, title, blood, birth, race, color, sex, etc., will fall nearly all the oppression, abuse, prejudice, emnity, and injustice, that humanity is now subject to.

Implementation of a meritocracy seems to involve at least three processes: (1) the elevation of the talented to positions of leadership and power; (2) differentiated economic and status rewards dependent upon position; and (3) equal opportunity to compete for rewards. The centerpiece of the meritocratic ideal is the promise of equal opportunity; that is, the quest for societal rewards must be a fair game. The U.S. public schools were assigned the task of keeping the game fair by affording all students a chance to develop their talents, and, thereby, become a success in a society in which the climb from the lowliest of backgrounds to the highest social positions solely depends upon innate ability coupled with steadfast efforts.

Note that a meritocratic system may yield unequal results among individuals even though it provided equal opportunity. Some individuals, so it is said, are more able and work harder than others; consequently, as long as the game is fair, they deserve their rewards. And, although education was thought to be an ideal mechanism for reducing the most obscene inequities, one outcome of meritocratic ideology is that some inequities must never disappear for they are, as deCondorcet (1955) proposed, "the result of natural and necessary causes which it would be foolish to wish to eradicate [p. 179]."

Many public school practices helped to reinforce the inevitability of the meritocratic assertion in the minds of learners during the time of mass schooling. For example, the 20 million or so McGuffey Readers sold during the period 1836 through 1920 told students that "God made the poor man as well as rich" and that "The poor if they are but good are happy [quoted in Bowers, 1969, p. 61]." Also, the meritocratic argument was evident in the popular literature of this period exemplified by the writings of pulp novelists such as Horatio Alger, Jr. Alger wrote more than 100 novels for boys -- success stories called Bound to Rise, Luck and Pluck, Tom the Bootblack, and so forth -- the total sales of which rose to almost 20 million copies (Allen, 1952, p. 56). The unfailing theme of Alger's books was the rise of earnest, bright, and hard-working boys (!) from rags to riches. His paper-bound guides to success were, and are, generally regarded by educated readers as trash; they were literal, prosy, unreal, and unsubtle. Yet they were the

delight of millions of American boys during the years between the Civil War and World War I. And it is possible that many of these boys received from Alger their first intelligible picture of the American road to wealth.

Perhaps it may be safely said that many Americans would still agree with early childhood educator Angelo Patri's (1927) statement that "the schools are the temple of a living democracy." Conventional folklore portrays that meritocracy successfully replaced aristocracy as a result of the almost 200 year old American experiment and that mass schooling played an important role in this outcome. But an easily observed social reality is that gross and debilitating inequalities among individuals still exist in U.S. society in, for instance, wealth, health, as well as quality and quantity of work available even though a myriad of school reform movements such as compensatory education and life adjustment education have been aimed at these problems throughout the history of mass schooling. As Katz (1968) noted, there has always been a tendency to blame students, or their parents, for the failure of these school reforms. Reformers posited that perhaps students unaffected by their reforms were hindered by inferior genotypes and could not benefit from any schooling. Or, maybe, these unaffected students came from such inferior home settings that they started "behind" other students. Deprivation, depravation ... nature, nurture ... genes, environment ... so the debate was launched and still flourishes, always taking a microscopic rather than a macroanalytic view of the functions and effects of schooling.

However, ever since the origins of mass schooling, dissenting scholars have perceived implacable contradictions between the stated intents and real functions of American public education. Among the recent works that have extended this dissenting tradition are studies by revisionist historians such as Greer (1972) and Spring (1972) and researches by radical political economists such as Bowles and Gintis (1973, 1974, in press; see also Gintis, 1969, 1971). These analysts have asserted that the real functions of the schools are social control, reproduction of an army of docile and manipulable workers and consumers, and, most fundamentally, the maintenance rather than the eradication of

social and economic inequities. For it is said through the careful management of these functions that U.S. corporate capitalism is maintained and expanded.

What, in fact, was the contribution of mass schooling toward the realization of the Great American Dream? Could improved schooling have a greater impact on the realization of this dream? These overriding questions seemed to motivate the authors of Inequality.

Inequality: A Summary

As Pettigrew (1973) noted, there could be considered at least three "reports" in the Jencks volume:

> The first consists of ingenious data analyses. They are interesting, ambitious, and found largely in the volume's footnotes and appendices. The second involves Jencks' interpretations of these research results and is found in the text of Inequality. These interpretations are provocative and well-written; they are also debatable and often far removed from the actual results. The third is the mass-media vulgarization that is vaguely related to Jenck's text and virtually unrelated to the actual results. Each of these three Jencks reports' requires review [p. 1527].

In this summary, I will try to fairly portray a composite of "reports" one and two, recognizing that the impact of Jencks study on the public's mind has been made, albeit unfortunately, by "report" three.

The Jencks study does not present any new data. Instead, a series of secondary analyses (see Cook, 1974) were conducted using data from such diverse sources as the Equality of Opportunity Survey (Coleman, 1966), Project TALENT (e.g., Flanagan & Cooley, 1966), National Opinion Research Center information on veterans in 1964, the late Sir Cyril Burt's (1966) studies of identical twins, U.S. Census social mobility and income distributions previously analyzed by Duncan, Featherman, and Duncan (1968), as well as other assorted studies too numerous to mention. For example, sometimes correlations between generically stated variables as IQ or socioeconomic status were estimated by averaging such correlations from several studies of uniquely-defined instances of these variables. Also, many of the entries in the same correlation matrix often came from independent studies. While this is certainly a cost-conscious

way to use available policy-relevant data, it, nonetheless, raises serious methodological problems that could not but inflate the estimation error of coefficients in path analytic models (see Duncan, 1966) which formed the bulk of Jencks' data analyses. But, additional technical critiques of the study await the next section of this essay.

In an extremely abbreviated fashion and without discussion of a myriad of intermediate methodological details, Jencks' findings may be summarized by saying that he found educational opportunities, educational attainment, occupational status, income, and job satisfaction all unequally distributed among individuals. Some explanations for these inequalities are briefly described below.

Educational opportunity. Access to school resources was quite unequal. Schools in some districts spent far more than some in other districts. Schools were somewhat segregated by social class but even more so by race. Within schools, most students were in the curriculum of their choice but a significant minority of students were the victims of tracking.

Cognitive skills measured by standardization tests. Although both genes and environment contributed approximately equally to the differences observed in cognitive skills, "Additional school expenditures are unlikely to increase achievement and redistributing [school] resources will not reduce test score inequality [p. 109]."

Educational attainment. "The most important determinant of educational attainment is family background [p. 159]." Qualitative differences between schools played a very minor role in determining how much schooling people actually received.

Occupational status. Occupational status of men was strongly related to their educational attainment even though, at the same time, there were great differences between men with the same amount of formal schooling.

Income. "Neither family background, cognitive skill, educational attainment, nor occupational status explains much of the variation in men's incomes [p. 266]." And, "...there is nearly as much income variation among men who come from similar families, have similar educational credentials, and have similar test scores, as among men in general [p. 254]."

Job satisfaction. This proved to be less explicable tha
pendent variables of interest in Jencks' study. "It was only
related to educational attainment, occupational status, or ea
[p. 255]."

In essence, then, adult success as it is defined in U.S.
seems to be relatively uninfluenced by schooling.

Jencks, et al., concluded that:

> We have not been very successful, however, in explaining
> inequalities. The association between one variety of in
> and another is usually quite weak, which means that equa
> one thing is unlikely to have much affect on the degree
> equality in other areas [p. 253].
>
> As long as egalitarians assume that public policy cannot
> tribute to economic equality directly but most proceed b
> ious manipulations of marginal institutions like the sch
> progress will remain glacial. If we want to move beyond
> tradition, we will have to establish political control o
> economic institutions that shape our society. This is w
> other countries usually call socialism. Anything less w
> end in the same disappointment as the reforms of the 196
> [p. 265].

If, as Jencks, et al., concluded, "marginal institutions
schools" do not directly and substantially influence societal
then what are the hopes for the success of the career educati
This is the topic of the next section of this essay.

Inequality and the Career Education Movement

In this part of my essay I will relate the implications
ity's findings and conclusions to the career education moveme
before these relationships can be exposed, a critical examina
quality of the evidence presented in Inequality is necessary
whether the study's findings and conclusions should be accept
reasonable educational policy makers, school people, and laym

Should Inequality have implications for career educatio
Jencks study has stirred considerable reaction. It received
review by the American Educational Research Journal as well a
American Journal of Sociology, and the Harvard Educational Re

devoted an entire issue to its discussion. Schoenfeldt (1974) described Inequality as, "...the most popular social sciences book of the past decade as evidenced by the fact that it enjoyed nationwide newspaper serialization... has been the subject of articles in all major news magazines and has been reviewed extensively in professional journals [p. 149]." Man's Greed Key to Success, Claims [sic] Harvard Researchers," blared a Nevada newspaper headline. "School is a Kind of Religion," was the tamer response of the Village Voice. An editorial cartoon in the reactionary Richmond (Virginia) Times-Dispatch pictured a school door with only an empty space behind it; the caption read, "The Door to Nowhere." One thing is for certain: that Jencks and his colleagues were housed at Harvard, and its attendant aura, had a great impact on the attention the published study received as was noted in a playfully ad hominem interview with Jencks printed in The Village Voice (October 12, 1972) under the title, "How Much Did Harvard Help?"

Reactions to Inequality have been mixed. For example, Nisbet (1974) called it, along with Rawls (1972) Theory of Justice, "bellwhethers for a line of scholarly research extending far into the future [p. 40]." And Pullman (1973) considered it to be, "...a benchmark in the study of how IQ, education, occupational status, and income are interrelated [p. 1540]." On the other hand, Hambleton, Peelle, Swaminathan, and Sawyer (1973) felt, "that there are sufficient technical, logical, methodological as well as substantive problems with this research to make it inappropriate to draw the conclusions that Jencks does [p. 29]." What are some of these problems?

Hambleton, et al., (1973, p. 31) discussed several shortcomings associated with the data base selected for the Jencks study. First, some of Jencks' data came from unspecified sources and, therefore, the quality of these data remains unknown. And much of the data identified in the Jencks study was attributed to the Equality of Educational Opportunity Survey (Coleman, 1966) which has been severely criticized (see, e.g., Bowles & Levin, 1968, or Moynihan & Mosteller, 1972). Second, Jencks' data was unduly restrictive. More complete information including variables such as school attendance, a wider variety of cognitive and affective skills, and student perceptions of school

environments might have altered the study's findings (see also, Clark, 1973). Third, the diversity of American schools, particularly those in rural impoverished and suburban elite settings, was under-represented in the data base.

In addition to noting the lack of quality of Jencks' data base, Hambleton, et al., (1973, pp. 32-33) listed several methodological difficulties evident in Inequality. First, substantial error may have been introduced into the estimation of schooling effects due to the absence of individuals' age and place of residence information. Second, while linear relationships among variables of interest were sought, important non-linear relationships may have existed thus decreasing the magnitude of schooling effects actually accounted for. Third, as Werts and Linn (1968) demonstrated, the establishment or the lack of schooling effects can frequently be supported by the same data depending upon the choice of the statistical technique selected for the data analysis. So, there must certainly be considerable indeterminancy in any statement of the nature of schooling effects forwarded (Jencks, et al., were aware of this problem; see p. 358). Fourth, the choice of individuals as the unit of analysis rather than groups of students, such as those formed by aggregating individuals' data from within classrooms, was questioned because, traditionally, instruction has been aimed at groups rather than individuals. Therefore, the effects of schooling should be on groups rather than individuals.

Are these criticisms of the quality of the research backdrop behind Inequality merely the results of scholastic hairsplitting or the disputatious nature of academics? Certainly not. Surely, few of the assumptions, techniques, and generalizations applied in Jencks' study would be tolerated in the lowliest masters thesis (cf., however, Jencks, 1973a, 1973b, 1973c, for rebuttals). But it may be worthwhile to cite a historical note on the debate surrounding the nature of inequality among persons.

Rousseau, in a discourse originally published in 1755, responded to the question posed by the Academy at Dijon, "What is the origin of inequality among men, and is it authorized by natural law?" Rousseau

began his essay by writing, "Let us begin, then, by laying the facts aside, as they do not affect the question." Taking a similar view, let it suffice to say that, even though Inequality's findings do not conclusively show the consequence of schooling, or the lack of it, on the quality of American life, the primary impact of Jencks' study has been to stimulate a resurgence of interest among moral philosophers, social scientists and the lay public in the nature and extent of, as well as solutions to, pervasive social and economic inequalities in the U.S. And, do not forget that these inequalities are real no matter what their causes, and have persisted even though public schooling has been in effect for some time (cf., Chiswick & Mincer 1972). Particularly, the Jencks' study's relevance for the career education movement does not appear to lie in its provision of direct policy implications ("Now we should do such-and-such in the schools") but rather its importance is that it suggests crucial questions about some of the assumptions held in the career education movement which clearly demand open debate and careful research.

What are Inequality's implications for career education? This question begs a prerequisite question: what is my notion of career education? Now, a synthesis of stated definitions of career education will not be provided since this task would require more than the available space. Nor would such a synthesis be especially productive since career education rhetoric is certainly not congruent with career education practice. Moreover, career education practices are not uniform but, instead, are quite uneven. However, there does appear to be an implicit ideology underlying this seemingly diverse career education rhetoric and practice. The first task of this part of my essay will be to reveal this ideology by briefly outlining the career education movement's colinearity with American faith in schooling as a means to arrive at idealistic meritocratic ends. Second, acknowledging the issues raised by Inequality, the career education movement's potential impotency as a means to these idealistic ends will be asserted. Third, it will be posited that career education will probably not only be an impotent source for school reform but that it will also likely act as a conservative force to maintain societal inequalities.

These three assertions were motivated by Inequality's major assertion that schooling has a minimal effect on adult life in U.S. society. And, as with Inequality's assertion, these three assertions do not have firm roots in a conclusive research base but rather they are merely suggestive of the focus of theoretical and empirical research that must be --and, perhaps, should have been -- coupled with vigorous debate by concerned persons in the career education movement.

What system of beliefs seems to underlie the career education movement? Very simplistically reduced, the career education concept appears to be no more than Parson's (1909) description of the ideal career decision-making process modified to view the development, choice, and maintenance of a career as a life-long, often dialectical, process. The purposes of career education seem to be to educate individuals about: (1) their "vocational self" -- that is, the pattern of individual abilities and needs that are said to be related to satisfactory work performance and satisfaction with work -- (2) the world of work -- that is, those ability requirements and need satisfiers which are said to be displayed by the range of careers available in society -- and (3) career decision-making skills --that is, the methods for making a career choice which accurately implements the "self" in the world of work. By accurate is meant that individuals' career choice should be consistent with their abilities and needs, never selecting an occupation for which they are under- or over-qualified or in which they might find their extrinsic or intrinsic needs incapable of being satisfied.

Note the centrality of meritocratic ideals in the career education concept. Career education can be viewed as a means for ensuring that the pursuit for slots in the career hierarchy, along with its attendant gradient of wealth and status, remains a "fair game." Armed with knowledge of their "true" abilities and needs which, in turn, are matched with the ability requirements and potential need satisfiers for an array of careers, individuals can find their natural and just position in the hierarchy of societal rewards. The responsibility of the schools, then, is to provide equal opportunity for individuals to acquire knowledge of self, careers, and decision-making skills. The individual who fails to

use the opportunities for career education is likely to be, at least, an unsatisfactory and unsatisfied worker or to be, at worst, unemployed. As simple or as perverse as it may seem to career educators, this represents my conception of the ideology surrounding the career education concept.

Accepting this conception for a moment, why may the career education movement prove to be an impotent force for implementing American meritocratic ideals? The answer to this question is that, even if it could be implemented in its most idealistic sense, career education still represents only one side of the coin. As Copa (1973) pointed out, education deals only with supply variables but, on the other hand, has virtually no control over demand variables. Said in another way, career education could superbly educate individuals about self, careers, and decision-making skills but, then, send them out into a working world in which government-stated expectations for a proper functioning labor market include an eight percent unemployment rate (always conservatively estimated) until 1980. Yes, there will be winners and losers in U.S. society in spite of career education.

However, perhaps the most serious problem which could render the career education movement impotent resides in the quality, not the quantity, of work available in U.S. society. Career education will inject individuals into a society which does not see the necessity of providing satisfying and potential-releasing work as a national goal. As Braverman (1974) extensively documented, work, as a necessary human activity, has been gradually transformed since the rise of industrialism from an active, inquiring, and adaptive exercise of human energy into an obedient, dumb, and mechanical application of human physical and intellectual strength, devoid of all that is original, ingenious, or creative. We should not be so blind as to think that the status of work has been degraded only for blue-collar or assembly-line workers. Collar color does not seem to matter. Intellectual as well as manual labor has become shredded, atomized, and sucked dry of skill under the imperatives of a production mode in which every unit of output is celebrated and every unit of input is the subject of miserly calculation.

So, career education is, paraphrasing Inequality, likely to have very little positive impact on adult life due to various influences associated with the superstructure of U.S. society over which career educators have no control. Now, if career education were to merely be impotent, then we could neatly classify it alongside other equally expensive and frivolous school reforms. But, on the other hand, the career education movement could act as a pernicious means to expand and perpetuate existing inequalities in U.S. society. How might this happen?

Education could be viewed as a means for adapting individuals to cultural norms (see, e.g., Carnoy, 1974, and Friere, 1971). From this viewpoint, career education could be conceived as a mechanism through which the notion of meritocracy is given credence and, thereby, the uneven distribution of societal rewards is shown to be natural and just. For example, the belief that there are different worker ability requirements for different jobs is part of the career education ideology. Thus, persons who are less able than the ability level required for a particular job might be counseled away from that job or offered additional schooling. However, it is well known among educational planners that there is considerable elasticity in the demand for labor (see, e.g.: Berg, 1970; Bowles, 1969; Dougherty, 1971; or Parnes, 1968). This means that it is likely that most jobs could be successfully performed by most people. Thus, career education could be characterized as a sorting device which uses the artificialities of ability testing and educational credentials to produce and justify a hierarchical and stratified societal structure.

Concluding Remarks

Jencks' study, Inequality, challenged kernel American beliefs in the efficacy of the schools as a means for social reform. What are the implications of Inequality, in spite of its technical deficiencies, for career education? First, it suggests doubts about the ultimate effectiveness career education could have in implementing American meritocratic beliefs. Second, it raises an exceedingly grim spectre: the career education movement could unwittingly affirm and maintain inequities in the quality of U.S. life. Career educators should examine these implications carefully.

What will be the systemic effects of career education? Particularly, what societal and individual factors would be suboptimized even if a career education system of the genre described in this essay actually existed? In a free society, what should be the form of that aspect of the educational institution which adapts individuals to work roles? These questions are suggested by this essay. These same questions appear to have remained unaddressed by educators responsible for the rise of the career education movement. Exploration of the alternative answers to these questions will assuredly raise another question: what is the form of a free society and what functions would an educational institution have in such a society? But, that is the topic of at least one more essay, isn't it?

References

Allen, F.L. The big change: America transforms itself, 1900-1950. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1952.

Berg, I. Education and jobs: The great training robbery. New York: Praeger, 1970.

Bowers, C.A. The progressive educator and the depression: The radical years. New York: Random House, 1969.

Bowles, S. Educational planning for economic growth. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1969.

Bowles, S. & Gintis, H. I.Q. in the U.S. class structure. Social Policy, 1973, 3, 65-96.

Bowles, S. & Gintis, H. If John Dewey calls, tell him things didn't work out. Journal of Open Education, 1974, 2 (2), 1-17.

Bowles, S. & Gintis, H. Nightmares and visions: Capitalism and education in the U.S. New York: Harper & Row, in press.

Bowles, S. & Levin, H.M. The determinants of scholastic achievement -- An appraisal of some recent evidence. Journal of Human Resources, 1968, 3, 1-23.

Braverman, H. Labor and monopoly capital: The degradation of work in the twentieth century. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1974.

Burt, C. The genetic determination of differences in intelligence: A study of monozygotic twins reared apart. British Journal of Psychology, 1966, 57, 137-153.

Carnoy, M. Education as cultural imperialism. New York: McKay, 1974.

Chiswick, B.R. & Mincer, J. Time series changes in income inequality in the United States from 1939, with projections to 1985. Journal of Political Economy, 1972, 80, 34-71. (supplement)

Clark, K.B. Social policy, power, and social science research. Harvard Educational Review, 1973, 43(1), 77-85.

Coleman, J.S., et al. Equality of educational opportunity. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1966.

Commanger, H.S. The American mind. New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1950.

deCondorcet, A.N. Sketch for a historical picture of the human mind. (trans. by J. Barroclough) New York: Dover, 1955.

Cook, T.D. The potential and limitations of secondary evaluations. In M.W. Apple, M.J. Subkoviak, & H.S. Lufler (Eds.), Educational evaluation: Analysis and accountability. Berkley, California: McCutchan, 1974.

Copa, G.H. Development of policy positions by outside groups. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Vocational Association, Atlanta, December, 1973.

Dougherty, C R.S. Substitution and the structure of the labour force. Economic development report no. 189. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, 1971.

Duncan, O.D. Path analysis: Sociological examples. American Journal of Sociology, 1966, 72, 1-16.

Duncan, O.D., Featherman, D.L., & Duncan, B. Socioeconomic background and occupational achievement: Extensions of a basic model. Final Report Project No. 50074 (EO-191), Contract No. OE-5-85-072. HEW, 1968.

Flanagan, J.C. & Cooley, W.W. Project TALENT: One year follow-up studies. Pittsburg: University of Pittsburg, Project TALENT, 1966.

Friere, P. Pedagogy of the oppressed. New York: Herder & Herder, 1971.

Gintis, H. Alienation and power: Toward a radical welfare economics. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Harvard University, 1969.

Gintis, H. Education and the characteristics of worker productivity. American Economic Review, 1971, 61, 266-279.

Hambleton, R.K., Peelle, H.A., Swaminathan, H. & Sawyer, J. The Jencks-saw puzzle: Sorting out the relationships among schooling, cognitive skills, and income. MEFORUM, 1973, 1(2), 29-33.

Jencks, C. The methodology of Inequality. Sociology of Education, 1973, 46, 451-470. (a)

Jencks, C. Inequality in retrospect. Harvard Educational Review, 1973, 43(1), 102-128. (b)

Jencks, C. Comment. American Educational Research Journal, 1973, 11, 169-175. (c)

Jencks, C., Smith, M., Acland, H., Bane, M.J., Cohen, D., Gintis, H., Heyns, B., & Michelson, S. Inequality: A Reassessment of family and schooling in America. New York: Basic Books, 1972.

Karier, C.J. Ideology and evaluation: In quest of meritocracy. In M.W. Apple, M.J. Subkoviak, & H.S. Lufler (Eds.), Educational evaluation: Analysis and responsibility. Berkley: McCutchan, 1974.

Katz, M. The irony of early school reform. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1968.

Mann, H. Twelfth report of 1848. In Life and works of . . . Vol. 14. Boston: Lee & Shepard, 1848.

Mosteller, F. & Moynihan, D.P. (Eds.) On equality of educational opportunity. New York: Random House, 1972.

Nisbet, R. Rousseau and equality. Encounter, 1974, 43(3), 40-51.

Parnes, H.S. Relation of occupation to educational qualification. In M. Blaug (Ed.), Economics of education: Selected readings. London: Penguin, 1968.

Parsons, F. Choosing a vocation. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1909.

Patri, A. The problems of childhood. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1927.

Pettigrew, T. Review of C. Jencks, et al., Inequality. American Journal of Sociology, 1973, 78(6), 1527-1532.

Pullman, T.W. Review of Jencks, et al., Inequality. American Journal of Sociology, 1973, 78(6), 1540-1544.

Rawls, J. A theory of justice. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1972.

Ross, E.A. Social Control. New York: Macmillan, 1906.

Schoenfeldt, L. Introduction to the symposium review of Jencks, et al. Inequality. American Educational Research Journal, 1974, 11, 149.

Spring, J.H. Education and the rise of the corporate state. Boston: Beacon Press, 1972.

Werts, C.E. & Linn, R.L. Analyzing school effects: How to use the same data to support different hypotheses. American Educational Research Journal, 1969, 6, 439-447.

Young, M. The rise of meritocracy, 1870-2033. New York: Random House, 1959.

SP8253:bs
(11/25/75)
(r/2)

The Career and Technology Education Monograph Series is simply a vehicle for preserving and sharing ideas. Each monograph will deal with one topic and may vary extensively in length and subject matter from monograph to monograph. Only those manuscripts judged acceptable by the monograph committee will be published. Manuscripts should be submitted in duplicate (original plus one copy) and preferably prepared according to the American Psychological Association Publication Manual specifications. Anyone is eligible to submit manuscripts. If found unacceptable, the original manuscript will be returned. Manuscripts should be submitted to:

Monograph Committee
Career and Technology Education Graduate Faculty
Bowling Green State University
Bowling Green, Ohio 43403